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Weekly Crop & Weather Roundup



Week Ending August 20, 2006

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This report can be found on the Internet at

http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Pennsylvania/Publications/Crop_Progress_and_Condition/index.asp

Excellent Week for Field Work: Last week the sun was shining as many enjoyed Ag Progress Days in State College, but many farmers were hoping for more rain. Farmers had 6 suitable days for fieldwork last week. The weather remained consistent as haymaking continued and oat harvesting came to a close. The corn began drying down and many farmers were making silage last week. The splash of rain received last week was just enough to keep crop conditions stable from the previous week. Apples, peaches, and potatoes continue to be harvested; with potato farmers still reporting problems with leafhoppers. Principal farm activities included baling hay and straw; repairing equipment; spreading manure; plowing; and harvesting oats, peaches, apples, sweet corn, corn silage, potatoes, and tobacco.

PA Topsoil Moisture for Week Ending August 20, 2006

Very Short	Short	Adequate	Surplus
Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
19	51	29	1

Crops: All current corn stages are significantly ahead of their respective 5-year averages. Seventy-eight percent of the corn has entered the dough stage, compared to 63 percent last year and 59 percent for the 5-year average. Forty-two percent has reached the dent stage. This figure is well ahead of last year's figure of 19 percent. The corn crop is quickly maturing at 14 percent, which is fabulous compared to the 5-year average of 3 percent. Due to the heat stress the corn condition continues to decline slightly. Currently, 72 percent of the corn crop is in good or excellent condition. Corn silage harvesting is well underway due to the rapid corn drying. Chopping corn silage is significantly higher than normal at 20 percent, in comparison to 6 percent for the 5-year average. Seventy-eight percent of the soybeans are in good or excellent condition. The oat harvest was nearly complete last week as farmers have 96 percent of the grains off of the fields. This year oat harvesting ended faster than it has in the past, surpassing the 5-year average by 18 percent. Potato harvesting is moving forward, as 24 percent have been dug, which is higher than the 5-year average at 18 percent. Tobacco harvesting, at 20 percent, is moving in line with the previous and 5-year averages. Alfalfa third cutting was ahead of schedule at 84 percent. In addition, at 8 percent, the fourth cutting was right on schedule with the averages. Although not much progress was made last week, timothy second cutting is still ahead of schedule at 82 percent. The quality of hay made has remained steady from the previous week, with last week's conditions reported as 1 percent very poor, 2 percent poor, 16 percent fair, 55 percent good, and 26 percent excellent.

Peach picking slowed down last week at 64 percent, which is down 1 percent from the 5-year average. Apple harvesting was productive last

week at 32 percent. This is 9 percent higher than last year and 12 percent higher than the 5-year average. The apple condition declined from the previous week, with 15 percent fair, 64 percent good, and 21 percent excellent.

Livestock: Pastures are growing at a slower pace, which means farmers are using baled hay earlier than expected. The cooler temperatures provide a much needed relief for livestock, considering the humid temperatures from the previous weeks. Pasture condition was reported as the following: 6 percent very poor, 20 percent poor, 42 percent fair, 25 percent good, and 7 percent excellent.

U.S. as of August 15, 2006: Above-normal temperatures prevailed across most of the Nation, with the exception of the Northeast, Great Lakes States, and Pacific Coast. In the central Corn Belt, moderate to heavy precipitation improved summer crop conditions, while mostly dry conditions in the northern Corn Belt caused conditions to deteriorate.

Corn: Acreage at or beyond the dough stage advanced to 67 percent, 5 percentage points ahead of last year and 13 points ahead of the 5-year average. The crop progressed rapidly in the Corn Belt and northern Great Plains under near-normal temperatures. Twenty-five percent of the crop was at or beyond the dent stage, compared with 21 percent last year and 19 percent for the 5-year average. Most states, including Pennsylvania, were ahead of the normal pace.

Soybeans: Acreage blooming or beyond reached 97 percent, the same as last year but 2 points ahead of normal. Progress was at or ahead of normal in all states, except Kentucky. Setting pods had begun on 85 percent of the acreage, 2 points behind last year but 8 points ahead of normal. Pod-setting progressed rapidly on the north side of the Ohio River Valley, advancing 21 points in Indiana and 23 points in Ohio. Progress was ahead of normal in most states.

Winter Wheat: Producers had harvested 97 percent of their acreage, compared with 96 percent last year and 95 percent for the 5-year average. Harvest was complete or nearly complete everywhere.

Small Grains: Barley producers had harvested 54 percent of their acreage, 11 points ahead of last year and 22 points ahead of normal. In the northeast, progress was well ahead of normal.

Ninety percent of the Nation's oat crop had been reaped, compared with 81 percent last year and 71 percent for the 5-year average. Harvest was complete in Nebraska and Texas and nearly complete in Iowa, Ohio, and South Dakota. Growers in most states were ahead of the normal harvest pace.

Weather Data For Week Ending August 20, 2006

Station	Last Week Weather Summary						April 1 - August 20, 2006					
	Temperature				Precipitation		Precipitation			GDD Base 50F		Base 40F
	High	Low	Average	DFN	Total	Days	Total	DFN	Days	Total	DFN	Total
Northwest												
Erie	84	58	72	2	0.74	2	13.86	-2.84	59	2,084	242	3,375
Franklin	86	51	69	1	1.40	3	23.97	4.50	68	1,977	232	3,309
Meadville	83	55	70	4	1.73	3	20.55	1.46	60	1,939	340	3,244
Mercer	85	48	69	2	0.98	3	26.39	8.05	64	1,881	155	3,201
Springboro	85	46	68	-3	1.18	3	24.00	7.27	65	1,747	-88	3,015
Warren	84	50	68	0	2.29	3	26.49	7.24	64	1,820	121	3,117
North Central												
Bradford Region	79	42	65	2	1.43	5	19.59	0.21	66	1,478	228	2,714
Emporium	85	50	68	3	0.88	2	22.81	3.17	63	1,851	455	3,185
Kane	82	40	64	1	1.99	3	20.74	1.17	55	1,354	123	2,582
Laporte	79	54	67	-2	1.32	2	26.12	8.20	68	1,635	-111	2,912
Lock Haven	88	49	70	2	0.68	2	19.80	2.14	54	2,131	286	3,496
Port Allegany	82	45	65	1	1.09	3	18.75	0.44	58	1,582	204	2,843
Renovo	88	50	68	-3	0.82	2	19.32	1.66	63	1,952	107	3,310
Ridgway	83	43	65	-1	1.05	3	20.70	1.06	63	1,589	193	2,876
Stevenson Dam	87	51	70	6	0.99	2	17.72	-1.92	57	1,967	571	3,319
Towanda	85	45	67	-2	1.00	2	18.16	3.32	57	1,973	213	3,292
Wellsboro	80	45	64	-1	0.79	2	16.93	1.96	58	1,549	224	2,809
Williamsport	88	51	73	3	0.78	2	17.05	-0.52	54	2,295	260	3,660
Northeast												
Hawley	82	44	66	-1	0.40	2	26.39	9.52	50	1,755	251	3,037
Wilkes-Barre/Sc	86	51	71	2	0.56	2	18.26	1.75	55	2,132	196	3,475
Susquehanna	83	48	68	3	1.32	2	26.50	8.44	64	1,832	391	3,129
West Central												
Butler	85	49	70	2	0.30	2	18.94	0.52	61	1,938	131	3,281
New Castle	89	51	73	5	0.60	3	21.45	4.71	60	2,153	343	3,507
Slippery Rock	87	48	71	4	0.44	2	23.55	5.67	67	2,003	368	3,346
Central												
Altoona/Blair	87	50	71	2	0.68	2	15.10	-1.08	53	2,049	113	3,408
DuBois	83	50	69	2	1.20	2	20.30	1.87	71	1,792	108	3,102
Lewistown	89	50	72	1	2.48	2	20.13	2.59	52	2,258	139	3,631
Middletown	89	61	77	3	0.32	1	19.39	2.35	45	2,668	279	4,058
Prince Gallitzi	87	45	67	0	0.77	2	18.86	-1.93	55	1,707	156	3,015
Selinsgrove	89	49	71	1	1.22	3	22.40	4.71	53	2,207	221	3,572
State College	87	55	72	3	0.57	2	14.25	-1.98	52	2,202	285	3,572
East Central												
Allentown-Bethel	87	53	73	2	0.33	3	22.77	4.42	56	2,407	216	3,781
Lehighton	85	52	70	-3	1.00	3	23.07	4.80	62	2,156	38	3,511
Matamoras	85	48	68	-3	0.77	3	20.20	1.46	60	1,917	-2	3,232
Mt_Pocono	80	48	67	3	0.93	4	26.06	6.38	68	1,742	417	3,031
Southwest												
Pittsburgh/Alle	87	59	74	5	1.89	2	18.58	1.27	57	2,296	354	3,675
Derry	85	56	72	3	1.40	2	21.58	3.64	57	1,956	126	3,303
Myersdale	84	43	65	-4	0.47	2	19.55	-0.13	68	1,488	-300	2,765
Mount Pleasant	87	47	70	3	2.71	2	20.01	-0.26	59	1,926	298	3,268
Pittsburgh Intl	86	56	74	4	0.65	2	15.47	-0.84	53	2,231	200	3,598
Connellsville	90	53	73	3	0.49	2	17.74	-1.55	72	2,224	158	3,590
Waynesburg	86	50	71	2	0.25	2	15.28	-2.64	53	2,017	136	3,377
South Central												
Biglerville	89	58	74	2	0.18	1	20.00	4.23	53	2,426	91	3,813
Everett	84	42	66	-5	0.20	2	15.15	-0.63	60	1,639	-276	2,996
Hanover	89	55	74	0	0.05	1	15.72	-0.05	52	2,393	58	3,774
Harrisburg_AP	89	59	76	3	0.23	2	18.67	1.63	51	2,604	208	3,994
South Mountain	84	49	70	0	0.04	1	23.01	6.83	55	1,910	-19	3,257
York	90	52	74	2	0.07	1	12.90	-4.49	47	2,378	54	3,753
Southeast												
Green Lane	87	55	73	3	0.09	2	24.25	6.33	54	2,450	361	3,828
Hamburg	89	56	74	4	0.35	3	22.85	1.94	62	2,492	577	3,868
West_Chester	88	54	74	2	0.13	1	20.91	1.35	46	2,342	29	3,714
Lancaster	88	57	75	3	0.14	1	23.96	5.63	54	2,494	292	3,878
Neshaminy Falls	86	51	71	-2	0.00	0	22.24	1.31	48	2,326	144	3,706
New Holland	89	54	75	3	0.04	2	17.58	-0.75	53	2,517	315	3,897
Philadelphia	90	65	79	4	0.00	0	18.10	0.23	42	2,913	398	4,320
Philadelphia NE	89	62	77	2	0.00	0	20.60	2.73	48	2,869	354	4,271
Reading	88	57	74	2	0.15	2	19.31	-0.09	51	2,561	396	3,942
Valley Forge Na	88	55	75	0	0.07	3	23.27	4.64	55	2,506	55	3,888
Willow Grove	85	59	75	3	0.00	0	17.40	-3.53	43	2,607	425	3,999

DFN = Departure from normal (using 1961-90 normals period).

Precipitation (rainfall or melted snow or ice) and pan evaporation in inches.

Precipitation days = days with precipitation of .01 inch or more.

Air temperatures in degrees fahrenheit.

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Internet Reporters' Comments, By County:

Reporters are from Extension Service (Ext), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Farm Service Agency (FSA), Conservation District (CD), farmers, commodity specialists, or other knowledgeable individuals.

ADAMS COUNTY, Thomas Kerr - Very dry conditions are pressuring the harvest of corn for silage. Producers are trying to get the silage off before the corn gets too dry. Other crops are suffering as well. What looked like a good year several weeks ago is now a year of average yields. Pastures are very short, forcing the use of baled hay earlier than expected.

ADAMS COUNTY, Judy A. Behney (FSA) - Adams County continues to be extremely dry. No rainfall was received this week. Temperatures have been in the 80's during the day and evenings around 60 degrees.

Corn is showing a lot of drought stress. Most stalks are dry about a foot or so from ground up and some ears are starting to fall as if the corn is drying down. Ears are not filled out due to lack of moisture. Corn silage harvest will be started the beginning of the week in the county due to the corn drying down due to drought. Early Soybeans are doing ok but need moisture to fill the pods. Some double-cropped soybeans aren't growing due to lack of moisture.

Apples continue to do well and are sizing up. Some coloring is starting due to cool nighttime temperatures. Apples continue to be harvested in the county. Harvesting is ahead of the normal pace. Peaches are almost done being harvested; another two weeks and peaches will be done.

Sweet corn continues to do well in some areas of the county. Pumpkins are suffering from the lack of moisture. Other vegetables continue to be harvested.

Overall, if rainfall is received in next few days some crops may benefit. However, a lot of crops are already stunned by the lack of moisture which will affect the quality of the crops.

CAMBRIA COUNTY, Dolly Little (FSA) - The corn is coming along fine. The county received a couple nice showers this week. Potato farmers are getting equipment ready to begin harvest.

CENTRE COUNTY, Dick Decker - This was a good week for field work. I had ½ inch of rain in my gage. The top soil moisture is low. We need a good day of rain to get things green again.

COLUMBIA COUNTY, Dan McCarty (AgChoice) - There were two showers during the week totaling 1 inch. Still very dry conditions. Corn is showing stress going into maturity and drying down fast. I would expect some silage to come off soon.

CRAWFORD COUNTY, Ron McCorkle (NRCS) - We had another good week for haymaking and finishing the oat harvest. Producers were busy getting ready for the 61st Annual CRAWFORD COUNTY FAIR, Aug. 19-26. This is the largest agricultural fair in the state and it is held in Meadville, PA.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY, John Rowehl - Crops, mainly soybeans, in areas of soils with low water holding capacity is showing damage from dryness & heat. Some areas received some rain Saturday night; at least as much as 1/2" in some areas.

DAUPHIN COUNTY, Paul H. Craig (EXT) - Soil conditions are getting dryer every day. Some areas received rain earlier in the week but south of Harrisburg did not get any. Corn silage crop is drying down rapidly and harvest has begun. In many fields the crop is more dry than anticipated based on the maturity stage of the kernel. Alfalfa leafhoppers appear to be decreasing in severity. Soybeans have been affected by the dry soil conditions. Some feeding on leaves by bean leaf beetles and grasshoppers have been reported. Late summer plantings of forage crops have taken place. Now if only we could get some additional moisture.

FAYETTE COUNTY, Don Fretts (EXT) - In general, conditions were very dry. We had some spotty showers on Saturday. Corn silage harvesting is beginning, with corn drying down pre-mature.

LANCASTER COUNTY, Burell Whitworth Jr (NRCS) - After all the rain in July, it's hard to believe that we need rain as much as we do. The little rain that came Saturday was not much. Corn is drying down fast. Some corn was down below 30 percent. Tobacco and corn silage harvest is underway. Corn fields are uneven; dry on the knobs and green in the low spots. This will be a good year for cover crops if we get the moisture. Some tobacco fields are already plowed and planted with cover crops.

POTTER COUNTY, David Stratton (FSA) - The third cutting has just been completed and is better than the 2nd cutting. Snap beans are being harvested with good yields. Corn is maturing earlier than normal.

SNYDER COUNTY, William C. Sheaffer - It was a good week for haymaking and for plant growth. On Monday, the rainfall ranged from one to two inches; and Saturday night, a band of showers provided another two tenths of an inch. A lot of good second and third cutting of hay was made, and the alfalfa is growing back very nice with little insect damage at this point. Many soybean fields are showing signs of significant insect damage. It's too early to determine if any affect on the yield. A number of corn fields are showing the effect of too much rain earlier this season. The corn has a pale color from a lack of sufficient nitrogen. The main activities for the week were haymaking, cutting corn silage, and attending Ag Progress Days.

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY, Terry Stehr (FSA) - Rainfall on August 15 was sporadic but brought some needed relief to areas of the county. We saw anywhere from .5 to 1.6 inches of moisture throughout the area. This moisture will help our soybean yields and provide our vegetable growers with a much needed break from their irrigation activities. A dry week is predicted which will allow harvest of some high quality hay.

SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY, William Keeney (NRCS) - Much needed rain arrived on Saturday, with 1 to 1.5 inches reported across the area. This helped pastures green up and corn to mature.

TIOGA COUNTY, Pamela Barnes - This was a good week for field work. Hay and straw baling were the main events of the week. We got some much needed rain Saturday.

TIOGA COUNTY, J. Craig Williams (EXT) - It was a good week for hay making. Cooler nights and days have helped the cows recover from the heat. Corn is tasseling well and we have time to get machinery ready for harvest.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY, John Lohr (FSA) - Much of the county got some much-needed rain early in the week. A few areas remain dry and crop yields are suffering. Most of the week was good for continued later-cutting hay harvest. Even with the rain and somewhat cooler temperatures, pastures have not yet recovered from the summer's dry, hot conditions.

PA Crop Progress for Week Ending August 20, 2006

Crop	Current Week	Last Year	5-Year Average
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Fall plowing	16	11	8
Corn, dough	78	63	59
Corn, dent	42	19	22
Corn, mature	14	2	3
Corn silage, harvested	20	4	6
Oats, harvested	96	93	78
Tobacco, harvested	20	19	19
Potatoes, harvested	24	16	18
Alfalfa, 3rd cutting	84	80	61
Alfalfa, 4th cutting	8	5	11
Timothy clover, 2nd cutting	82	69	61
Peaches, harvested	64	58	65
Apples, harvested	32	23	20

PA Crop Condition for Week Ending August 20, 2006

Crop	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Corn	1	3	24	49	23
Soybeans	0	4	18	56	22
Quality of hay made	1	2	16	55	26
Pasture	6	20	42	25	7
Apples	0	0	15	64	21

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